

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE LITERARY SOCIETIES

OF THE

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE,

AT LEXINGTON,

ON THE 4TH OF JULY, 1854.

BY B. J. BARBOUR,
OF ORANGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

Published by request of the Societies.

RICHMOND:
MACFARLANE & FERGUSON.
1854.

A D D R E S S .

GENTLEMEN :—You will pardon me in commencement for repeating the substance of my letter accepting the position I occupy to-day—I have obeyed your call rather for the opportunity it affords me of expressing the deep interest I feel in your institution than from any hope of making an adequate return for the compliment you have paid me. And without affectation I may say that I labor under a double embarrassment in fulfilling this engagement. Many years—I need not say how many—have elapsed since I left College, and hereafter you will be better able than now to appreciate the hesitation of a farmer more accustomed to “entwine his thoughts with Nature in the fields, than Art in galleries,” to appear before those whose active acquaintance with literature enables them to detect the first anachronism in history, or the slightest trip in the classics, especially on the part of one who never claimed to be very sure-footed.

But if I feared to stand the ordeal of a literary institution, I was still more doubtful as to the propriety of coming to speak, in my desultory way, to those whose occupation teaches them to “talk plainly and to the point.” I could but fear that my thoughts, set in loose array before you, would be as distasteful as was the courtier’s bald, disjointed chat to Harry Percy—for I have observed that the strict discipline of the camp teaches and calls for terse and nervous speech, for compact arguments as well as for solid columns—and will only pardon attempted ornament as it allows the burnished armor, the waving flag, the stirring music and the cadenced step, as the incitements to a more rapid movement and a more vigorous attack.

Coming then as a militiaman before regulars, I am sure you do not expect any discourse on tactics from one who “never set a squadron in the field, nor the divisions of a battle knows

more,"—nay not half so well as the fair daughters of Rockbridge. Gibbon says somewhere that he was better able to write the decline and fall of the Roman empire from having served for a short time in the Hampshire militia. But whatever of clearness this may have added to his "luminous page," I do not feel that my martial experience, embraced in a single appearance at a general muster, has at all increased my ability to address those who have "given the first watches of the night to the red planet Mars." But while I ask you to grant me credit for the most complete and absolute ignorance in military matters—that I have not skill to "trench a field or raise a rampart"—that I am entirely unacquainted with the grand conceptions of Vauban and the sublime reveries of Marshal Saxe, you will yet allow me to express my admiration of the wisdom which has induced our State to abandon the wretchedly absurd militia system to concentrate its efforts upon such an institution as this—under able management to form a nucleus for an effective citizen soldiery, by sending forth from time to time a band of intelligent officers, well prepared in the hour of need to guide and direct the energies of the State, and "bring the freeman's arm to aid the freeman's cause."

Guided and animated by this feeling—and recollecting that your institution was formed less for the chances of war than for the more solid triumphs of peace, of science and of morality, I could not hesitate in the selection of a topic upon which to address you. Denied a fellowship in other things, you yourselves have indicated to me, what another portion of the title of your institution would have guaranteed, that you acknowledge brotherhood in the name of a noble mother—that there is a loftier music under which we can march together. And I have come to you, therefore, secure in the consciousness that if challenged at your lines, I could sincerely answer—a friend—and advancing, give that unvarying countersign of our affections—that perpetual watchword of our hearts—Virginia!

It is of her that I would speak to you today—a day I know which invites a broader range though it cannot offer, I hope, a more acceptable topic. Consecrated by the birth of a nation and by the death of patriots, its return and celebration would justify

us in wandering in thought and fancy over that grander heritage those patriots have bequeathed to us—or with the license granted usually on such an occasion, we might be pardoned for extending our gaze and seeking to

“Pierce the war cloud's rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun,
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.”

But I think we can spend our time just now more profitably in running the shorter lines of our smaller, but goodly heritage—and find our account in treasuring the advice of Dundas to Pitt when the latter, walking rather unsteadily after dinner, was speaking prosily about the “balance of power.” “Hang Europe's balance: mind you own!”

It seems to me, my friends, that we busy ourselves too much with these things already—that there is a stronger wish to set the world to rights, than to keep our own houses in order. I would not wish of course to discourage an enlightened acquaintance with current history, or seek to check investigation in all proper and legitimate directions. But I think that all sober-minded people will agree with me in saying, that there is too great a tendency in the present age to expansiveness at the expense of profundity—that tinsel and veneering are too readily accepted in the place of solid mahogany and pure gold—that the broad views we hear so much of only encourage shallow thinking—that quid-nuncs are increasing more rapidly than intelligent citizens—and that the electric telegraph, that mad gossip as Falstaff would have called it, is too true a type of an age that I greatly fear would rather have the latest piece of slander flashed along the wires, than to be assured of the recovery of the lost decade of Livy—and boasts a knowledge of the seat of war in Europe that it does not possess of the map of its own country.

Nor do I intend to weary you with any thing more than an incidental allusion to that other exciting subject of the day—that morbid philanthropy and calculating humanity, which takes a fugitive slave for its hero, drapes a city in mourning when the constitution is obeyed, appeals to a higher law for revenge, and

flies with cowardly terror to a lower law for protection, and comes, with blood on its hands and scripture on its lips, to lift the assassin's knife and light the incendiary's torch, in the name of a meek and lowly Saviour. I turn from these more exciting subjects, because I feel, as I hope you do, that we can dwell for a time more pleasantly and profitably on matters nearer home. As you have stood upon some one of these lofty peaks by which you are surrounded, and have strained the eye to embrace the grand panorama before you—the billowy hills, and long waving line of our blue Pyrenees—you have felt at length how much more pleasant it was to withdraw the aching gaze and fix it on some quiet valley nestling beneath you, glistening it may be with the golden harvest or the springing corn, and smiling with all the other evidences of peace and happiness, as though conscious that nature had laid its hand in blessing upon it. Even so let us withdraw our gaze from the great world for a time, to inspect our own loved State—to take counsel together as to our duties, and how we may best perform the part assigned us in the service of a mother whose affections and bounties so well entitle her to the aid and comfort of all her children.

We all feel that Virginia does not occupy her proper position in the confederacy of States. We all regret that in the great march of material improvement she has lagged behind until she is hardly within bugle-call of her sisters. I have felt it my duty to speak thus plainly whenever a fair opportunity occurred, and in return have been denounced as a croaker—but I trust when you have heard me through, you will defend and absolve me from such a title. It would be far easier, as it certainly would be far more agreeable to speak in one unbroken strain of hope and joy of the present and future of Virginia—to gloss over the errors of our system—the defects in our practice—and utter pleasant words to soothe our consciousness of wasted powers and neglected opportunities. But we have done this too long and found an increase, not a mitigation of the evil. It is upon the “languishing agriculture of Virginia” that the abolitionist makes his bitterest sarcasms—nor can we deny in the face of the census returns, that we have the melancholy farce enacted in our midst of framing constitutions for men that cannot read

it—that we have eighty thousand ready recruits for the Know Nothing party, if its name be the measure of its information—that our young men, the pride and strength of every land, are leaving us by thousands, torn like jewels from the diadem of Virginia, to deck the brows of more fortunate States—and that in every section of our broad commonwealth we have howling wildernesses that, under happier auspices, should be smiling with prosperity and laughing with abundance. I am told that a brighter day is dawning upon us. I am happy to believe it, and have myself proudly proclaimed it—but it is our duty to see that it is something longer than a polar winter's day—that we shall make a sustained and not a mere galvanic effort—that we shall act not from the sheer necessity of the moment, but from a higher, sterner, and more continuous sense of duty.

It becomes us, then, to investigate as clearly as possible the defects which have led to the past decline—to promote the present tendency to advancement—and thus endeavor to learn and to remember “what makes a nation happy, and what keeps it so.” I beg leave to say in advance that I am only seeking to set your own minds to work upon this subject. I have not come to you to-day with any elaborately planned system—any patent panacea for our ills. I have no faith in mere ephemeral associations which propose to regenerate a country by administering a draught, or by withholding it. I do not believe in building a house upon one stone, defending a fort with one gun, or launching a seventy-four with only one mast. I trust the day is far distant when the morals and religion of Virginia will be only statutory. I trust we shall be long exempted from those false systems under which the “individual withers, and the world is more and more.” To you, gentlemen, as Virginians, warmly interested in every thing that pertains to the honor, profit and glory of your native State, I would say beware of these new fangled plans whose inevitable tendencies are to break up the ancient landmarks—and in proposing to substitute a system for conscience, and a shibboleth for morality, would make all men as much alike as three-cents pieces, and just about as valuable.

In the present day there is an alarming tendency, as it seems to me, towards centralization—a disposition to legislate upon

every subject—to organize every man's household for him—almost, as Sheridan has it, to make us “start by rule, and blush by example.” I believe this spirit of interference to be at total variance with true, rational freedom, whether civil or religious. I say civil or religious, for it is an easy transition for this spirit of interference to pass from one to the other. Having settled a man's condition in this world, it would inevitably undertake to prescribe his destiny in the next. Amid this wild commotion of reform, we have still time and light enough to look to the compass by which we have steered so long, and to recall the fact that the old Anglo-Saxon notion of liberty was that of the greatest individual freedom compatible with the interests of society—to appeal to neither neighbor nor State for aid that it could do without—and while it punished crime promptly and sternly, did not seek to amend the Decalogue, nor waste its energies in the effort to settle that vast multitude of questions which a higher wisdom had decreed should be decided only between man and his God. Individualism, I repeat, is the characteristic of all true freedom, whether civil or religious. I do not, of course, use this word in that selfish sense which would make the interests of individuals superior to the common interests of society—but in that higher sense which shall make each member of a community feel that under Divine Providence he has a work to perform—some greater, some less. The parable which tells us of the distribution of the talents, shows us in the very inequality of the distribution, that it is to individual energy we must look for the greatest achievements. There is no warrant in that parable for communism, or joint stock philanthropy. Constituted as we are for different purposes and with different powers, man can only reach his highest development under that system which not only allows, but encourages the full display of each peculiar mind, and the warmest efforts of every sympathizing heart.

To all this it may be answered, as I have been answered, that in Virginia at least there is but little evidence of this tendency to centralization, this disposition to substitute governmental action for individual exertion. I wish I could think so. I wish I could shut my eyes and close my mind against the melancholy convic-

tion that as a people we look too much to the State for aid—that we wait too supinely for others to do for us what we could and should do better and far more promptly for ourselves. Candor, I think, will declare that we are too lazy and too dependant. One illustration must suffice. Look at our system of internal improvements. Our legislatures have expended money enough, if properly administered, to have covered the whole State with a network of improvements, radiating in every direction, and enabling Virginia to extend her arms and embrace all her children. Instead of this, what do we behold? What have we to show for our money but splendid failures and magnificent abortions? We have been Titans in commencing, but alas! we have been but pigmies in concluding. An ancient apothegm warns us that we should commit the beginning of every great action to Argus with his hundred eyes, and its completion to Briareus with his hundred hands—but I fear with us the rule is just exactly reversed. Briareus commences, then folds his many arms and sits down with Argus to look on, and speculate as to the probable completion of the work. Virginia for the past ten or fifteen years has but acted the part of the over-fond and foolish mother, and instead of exercising her judgment, has in too many instances only impaired the patrimony of her children by gratifying every idle whim and importunity and conflicting caprice. She has attempted to give substance to the dream of the visionary—she has been too ready to give the selfish credit for patriotism—with characteristic profuseness and recklessness has been prompt to spend while there was a dollar in the purse, and to borrow when there was not—until at last, aroused from her credulity, (for I trust she is aroused,) she finds that not one single great work is finished, except in the highly excited imaginations, or on the highly colored engravings of their projectors—that she is burdened with unavailing taxes—her people still separated and divided—jealousies between her towns and wrangling among her counties—her resources undeveloped—some of the fairest portions of her territory alienated in affection or made tributary to other States, and that after all her efforts and expenditures she must still look to the future for her greatness, and to the past for her renown. I am told that individual agency,

the action of citizens, could never have accomplished what we see around us. Perhaps it could not—at least it would have shown its wisdom in not attempting so much. To the argument that private capital was not equal to such burdens, there is the obvious answer that the citizens of the State must pay the debt at last—and that the work will be finished sooner and the debt more promptly paid where personal interest and active individual agency are the spurs to exertion. And we have the facts that in Georgia, a State originally not better supplied with capital than ourselves, the works of improvement, constructed by private companies are finished and paying handsomely—while the only road there which is doing badly, is that built upon State account. I honestly believe that Virginia would this day be in a better condition if without one mile of railroad she were without debt. We might then hope that instead of dissipating her energies and pouring forth her treasures to run to waste, or water but the desert, she might profit by the sad experience of other States and of the Federal Government that politicians are the worst road makers in the world—that she would determine to work through her citizens and not by her Legislature. We might then hope that one channel would be opened—our grand Aorta along which might flow the life blood now pent up in her mighty heart.

It may seem inappropriate on such an occasion, to dwell upon these things—and yet it cannot be wrong to warn you as Virginians of the greatest danger threatening your native State. I should be untrue to myself and to you if I failed to give utterance to the fear that oppresses me—that under the corrupting system of Internal Improvements, as prosecuted in Virginia, patriotism has been weakened—that low and selfish manœuvring is taking the place of a noble and lofty State pride. And unless Virginia determines speedily to remove the cancer, by refusing farther appropriations, or by the more effectual remedy of selling her interests in the principal works, and thus breaking up the sources of combination against the Treasury, it requires no prophet to foretell the melancholy result. We can but recollect the woe of wealthier commonwealths—we can but look forward with dread of that hour which has come to others, and may come to

us—when hope deferred shall at length make the heart sick—when an overburdened people shall forget “the clear renown it used to wear”—when multiplied disasters shall at length suggest dishonor—when with works unfinished, with faith broken, and credit gone, Repudiation shall come at last with her black brush to finish the picture, come to add shame to grief, and infamy to ruin!

You feel inclined, with noble impulse, to say this can never be. It is for you in part, as it is the duty of every Virginian, who links his own personal honor with the credit of his State to say it shall not be. Every thing should be done to encourage the particular friends of the larger works in their present noble efforts to complete their improvements on their own credit and from their own resources. And when this is accomplished, we may dismiss all fears. It will be easy to quiet and crush those smaller cormorants whose existence depended upon the success of the larger—and we shall reap the higher profit in the valuable lesson that individual energy is a stronger force than legislative action, and the industry of citizens a better capital than State subscription.

In speaking to you of these matters I beg you to believe that I have a higher motive than that of mere crimination. I have dwelt on it for a time as the most striking illustration of the position I have assumed and the lesson I would inculcate. It is far, very far from my purpose to utter wholesale denunciations against the friends of Internal Improvements, a class that includes our most enlightened and purest men. It is against the corrupt and corrupting system that I would warn you, and all Virginians. There are many things that the State should not interfere with, and this is one. The railroad mania of England warns us that even when guarded by lynx-eyed personal interest what frauds may be perpetrated in the prosecution of public works, and the late developments in Northern railway matters, prove that even our more astute brethren are not exempted from the danger of over issues.

Our system has as yet escaped the imputation, or at least the proof of criminality, and has disarmed resentment by a full confession of folly. Many, perhaps most of the evils of this system,

have sprung from an utter ignorance, and an entire consequent neglect of the true interests of the State. And I have come to ask you, among other things, to do what I fear too many of our Legislators have failed to do—to spread the map of Virginia before you—to trace out not only her dotted boundaries and her pencilled shores, but to study her condition, her wants, and her resources—to bend your head to catch the pleadings of her feeble voice, and then, with noble resolution and high resolve, here in the purer atmosphere, and amid our grander scenery, to consecrate yourselves to her service. And here let me entreat you in all kindness and confidence to commence your life of duty by casting off or repelling that false pride too common in our State, which is prone rather to exact than to render honor. I hope and believe that the day of morbid thinking and miserable working is past—that the time is at hand when the youths of Virginia will deem it no degradation to earn an honorable independence in the cause of their State by the strength of their own good right arms—will believe that idleness is not meritorious, and labor not humiliating—that an embrowned cheek is no derogation from the gentleman, and that a hardened hand may be but the surer pledge of a warmer heart. If you value the nobler parts of the Virginia character, its true nobility of soul, its scorn of meanness, its high-toned honor, and all those other social and moral qualities which have so long adorned it—qualities that its enemies have pretended to deride, but before which they have ever stood abashed—if you would preserve and transmit these, you must early learn that their true basis is independence. You must learn to seek other roads to wealth and fame than in the walks of overcrowded professions, or along the precarious and slippery paths of politics. Do not think I have come to read you a homily against ambition. I would myself suspect the sincerity of any man who would proclaim himself insensible to the good opinion of his fellow men. There is much truth in the old scholastic aphorism, that he who lives wholly detached from his kind, must be either an angel or a devil. But what I would impress upon you is, first, that however glittering the prize, it is but a false ambition which does not hold self-respect far above any office in popular or governmental gift, and secondly, that if

office, in the only form in which you should accept it, is withheld, if it be not offered without solicitation, and won without dishonor, it is still in your power with talent and perseverance, to gain high and enduring distinctions such as midnight caucusses cannot give, nor scheming politicians take away. We have a signal proof of what a man may accomplish for himself, in our distinguished fellow citizen, Matthew F. Maury. We proudly claim him as a Virginian by birth, but freely relinquish him to the world of science for its adoption. We see in him a man whom kings have sought to decorate and nations have learned to honor, as one who desires knowledge less for his own fame than for the good of mankind. His Wind and Current Chart, second only in value to the compass, has taught the mariner in every sea the habits of the shifting winds, and customs of the mountain billows, and has given him a name that is uttered with gratitude on every passing breeze, and borne in thunder on every gale that sweeps the stormy deep.

It is granted to but few to make their mark in the political world—it is not often, in the words of our distinguished Senator, that a man can marry his name to a great principle—the triumph of the orator is but fleeting, and the strength of the logician is frequently wasted on idle or chimerical schemes and subtleties. The lasting affections of a people or of a community naturally centre upon him who does some *practical service*—whose genius and philanthropy shine in good deeds—who works silently and disinterestedly, and finds more true joy in the performance than in the reward of noble actions—a purer pleasure in the consciousness that he has soothed one aching heart, that he has brought quiet and happiness to some sorrowing hearth, than he who commands the applause of listening Senates and pawns his conscience for empty and prostituted honors.

If you enter political life, let it be with the full persuasion that there is a higher fame in advancing the prosperity of your country than in adding to your own personal reputation. Publish no catalogue of your own merits, and be not the advertiser of your own deserts. Waste not your time like Rogero in the Rovers, “sitting by the deep pool of despondency angling for impossibilities.” Virginia has need for all her sons—she has em-

ployment for all. It is not necessary for any of them to renounce the land of their birth. The discontented spirit finds no relief in flight. Horace asked two thousand years ago,

“What wanderer from his native land
E’er left himself behind?
The wayward thought, the restless will,
And discontent attend him still,
Nor quit him while he lives.”

To all those who complain that within their own State they have no opportunity to rise, I am ever disposed to repeat the caustic reply once given to a young Virginian. He was asking an old gentleman just returned from the West, if he saw any opening for a young man of talent. “Sir,” was the appropriate answer, “there is an opening for a young man of talent *everywhere*.” Our engineers, our professors, our teachers should all be Virginians. There is honor as well as profit in many occupations that we neglect and almost despise. Virginians must go to work. They must remember that the days of entailed estates and of inherited renown are past, and with them should pass away that false feeling which is too proud to beg, too lazy to work, but is most happy to compromise matters by *soliciting* an office! Let us change all this, and feel that every occupation is dignified by the independence it yields, and ennobled by the fact that it is assisting in bringing back the smile of health and joy to the faded cheek of Virginia.

Acknowledging the painful fact that Virginia as a State, though full of the “excellency of dignity and the excellency of power,” has merited and met the fate of Reuben, “unstable as water thou shalt not excel”—we are obliged to admit also that her children taken individually evince a lack of that fixedness of purpose, that unconquerable will which alone can bear us in triumph through the trials and troubles and difficulties of this world. We are too easily satisfied, and too easily depressed. We are too much like Byron’s Jack Skyscape,

— “a mercurial man
Who fluttered over all things like a fan.
More brave than firm, and more inclined to dare
And die at once, than wrestle with despair.”

In our studies we lack concentration. We seek a smattering in all things and gain perfection in none. Too many of us lead aimless lives. Every man, whether standing on the threshold, or engaged in the busy scenes of life, should have a clear purpose—**A CLEAR PURPOSE.** He should fix his eye upon some point he is determined to reach, (taking care by the way not to fix it too high, for it is more agreeable and graceful to rise than to fall,) and then resolved to labor and to wait, success will come, or in its place a noble fortitude that will sustain him in every trial, and nerve him to mightier efforts.

It has been allowed to but two men in our country, John Quincy Adams and Hugh Swinton Legaré—perhaps I may properly add a third, Edward Everett—I know of but these three to whom with truth can be applied the words of the eulogist of one of them, that by genius and industry they had climbed from peak to peak until arrived at the summit, the whole panorama of knowledge and science lay accurately mapped at their feet. And even of these it may be safely assumed that it had been better for themselves and for their country if they had contented themselves with a more restricted range of thought and investigation. But though two or three have reached the summit of Mont Blanc, how many have failed, sinking with exhaustion or returning with a few lichens, the dreary evidence of a drearier failure. I would not wish of course to see my countrymen contracting their minds to particular objects to the total exclusion of all other elements of a liberal education. I would not have them like the mathematician who considered *Paradise Lost* a poor poem because it proved nothing, nor like the linguist who considers it the highest exercise of human intellect and human ingenuity to chase some poor fugitive word through the obscurities and sinuosities of a dozen languages. But I do object to the modern notion of making a voyage round the world of science in a few months or even years. I am utterly opposed to this rapid review of the realms of thought, about as satisfactory and profitable as the study of geology from a railroad car.

Every observant person must have noted the effects of this style of aimless study upon the Southern mind—its tendency to diffuseness—making it prefer glitter to strength and gaudiness to

grandeur of thought. While we are thus getting gems and flowers we neglect to lay a solid foundation for Southern literature. To the same source must we ascribe the fact that we have so few finished statesmen. With at least equal intellects, and far higher powers of elocution, our Southern orators are often overwhelmed by laborious Northern adversaries by their masses of figures and tabular statements. It would be ludicrous, if it were not lamentable, to see how often our Southern men on reaching a point that requires accuracy of statement, familiarity with detail and all the other evidences of order and method—how, failing in these, they are obliged to take refuge in idle declamation, or worse still, in bitter and degrading personalities. This style of study produces indecision of character. The young man who has studied without an object may, upon a review of his mental forces, have the vanity to conclude that he is as good for one thing as another—but alas! the more righteous verdict of the world, and one that he very readily confirms in after years himself is, that he is good for nothing. It is this scattering of the powers of the mind—this lack of finish in any particular branch of knowledge that should indicate an avocation, which gives us so many nerveless saunterers upon the stage—so many idlers waiting, like our friend Wilkins Micawber, for something to turn up—whistling for the breeze when they should be tugging at the oar—losing each day a portion of their self respect—too often sinking as slaves to vicious habits—becoming the proper agents for the dirty work of party, or resorting to the lower shifts of necessity and degradation. It is this system in part, (with the additional fact that we have left among us some of the worse features of aristocracy,) that gives such currency to the bandit maxim, that “the world owes me a living”—uttered generally by those whose characters warrant us in saying, that if society does really owe the debt, it most certainly is not “for value received.” The nobler maxim, as I have already inculcated, holds that each citizen owes a debt to society—and the truer policy is that which looks for its compensation in the rich harvest springing from law and order—from that diversified employment which brings forth every beauty and all power—adorns and strengthens society with variety and contrast—as nature teeming with multiform

abundance and loveliness covers the valley with flowers, clothes the plain with golden harvests, and crowns the hill with noble forests.

It is this directness of aim and purpose, this diversified employment which has given to England so many eminent men in the different walks of Literature, of Science, of Art, and of every branch of industry. By these multiplied and blended powers she has laid every clime under tribute, and made her little island the centre of Civilization—the mighty heart by whose pulsations are measured the health and strength of every commercial country, as she has been the great fountain from which in later times every nation has drawn the first draughts of civil liberty and religious freedom. My prayer is that my own country, profiting by her example and warned by her errors, may exceed even her strength, and crown even her glory—and that as a portion of the country of promise, responsible in more than ordinary measure for its destiny, and rich in all the elements of material and moral grandeur, Virginia shall determine to perform her proper part in the great drama. To effect this, I return as to a chorus in saying that, each of her sons must determine to fulfil his whole duty.

If his thoughts are turned to literature, let him with De Quincey invoke the genius of common sense to keep him from sacrificing his peace, his bodily and intellectual health to a life of showy emptiness, of pretence, of noise and of words, and to teach him how far more enviable is the reputation of having produced even one work, though but in a lower department of art, (such as the *Vicar of Wakefield*,) which has given pleasure to myriads, than to have lived in the wonderment of a gazing crowd like a rope dancer, or a posture master, with the fame of incredible attainments that tend to no man's pleasure, and which perish from the memories of all men as soon as their possessor is in the grave.

So too by giving his earnest attention shall a man learn to love, and seek to dignify his profession, whatever it may be. And in this connection I am tempted to quote again what I have often quoted before, the noble words of Bacon on this subject—"I hold every man a debtor to his profession—from the which as

men do of course expect to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty by way of amends to endeavour to be a help and an ornament thereunto." It is this spirit which gives the noblest impulse to all actions—which teaches us that we have duties to perform as well as rights to maintain. A clear purpose once formed to perfect ourselves in our calling will leave us but little time to discuss the faults or envy the fortunes of others. Prospering ourselves, we shall be willing to see others prosper. The author from whom I have already quoted, well remarks that a good scheme of study (~~as~~ of business) will soon prove itself to be such by this one test—that it will exclude as powerfully as it will appropriate; it will be a system no less of repulsion than of attraction. Once thoroughly occupied by the deep and genial pleasures of an elevating pursuit, you will be indifferent to all others that had previously teased you with a transient excitement. His illustration of this fact perhaps will strike you. He says it is just as we sometimes see a young man superficially irritated as it were with wandering fits of liking for three or four ladies at once, which he is absurd enough to call "being in love"—but once profoundly in love, he never makes such a mistake again, all his feelings after *that*, being absorbed into a sublime unity. I hope you will try both of De Quincey's tests—that of faithful attention to elevating pursuits, and this "concentration of feelings into a sublime unity." He is so untrue to his own noble nature as to contend in another portion of his works that marriage is inconsistent with the greatest triumphs of life—but this must have been uttered in a moment of irritation when his wife had just taken his opium or laudanum bottle from him. At least I hope I may be pardoned for differing from such high authority, and for saying—not in the spirit of idle compliment to my countrywomen—but in the truth and sincerity of my heart, that an early marriage as it is confessedly the surest pledge of happiness, so too it is frequently the strongest assurance of distinction. The eye of a loved companion has been the light which has saved many a noble mind from stranding—the gentle hand of woman has often had power to lift the stalwart man along the steep of fame—and whatever of renown the proud and lonely man may win, he will be forced to acknowledge that

the most brilliant fortunes and the highest honors still lack their brightest charm when unshared by the noble and devoted wife.

And when, under these bright influences, we have encouraged a nobler love of independence and a higher source of action—in the resultant of these radiant and mighty forces we shall find what we have needed so long—a Virginia spirit and a spirit in Virginia. But that spirit must be aroused speedily if we would not have the peculiar type of Virginia character blotted out forever. And I confess for myself that I would consider her prosperity too dearly bought if effected by foreign hands. Though the State were covered with improvements—though each hall hour were proclaimed by the warning note of the rushing train—though populous cities and fertile fields should give us assurance of a mighty prosperity, I should still mourn the loss of that type of Man and Woman which belong peculiarly to Southern States, as the artist mourned for the blush of the sixth maiden. It is to preserve these that I would have the sons of Virginia become the genii of her prosperity, and be her strength, her power, her safety and her pride. I know it is very much the fashion now-a-days to talk in swelling phrase of loving your country first and your State afterwards, but I would reverse this process, for I have ever felt that I should be a better American as I was a truer Virginian. Not that I would encourage a cold and selfish isolation of feeling—not that I would wish a severance of this Union while there is hope of its remaining a Union of free and equal States. I feel that upon its preservation depend the brightest hopes that ever dawned upon humanity. I feel that to ask what the North could do without the South is as heartless as to ask how much of vitality would be left in the quivering limb when severed from the parent trunk—as idle as to ask how the fragments might sparkle, when the diamond had been shattered. So long as we can believe that the insults and injuries heaped upon us are the offences of a few active fanatics perpetrated in opposition to the feelings of a majority of the Northern people, let us endeavour to feel with the ancient Douglas,

“What if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,
My sense of public weal so low.

That for mean vengeance on a foe,
I should the cords of love unbind,
That knit my country and my kind?"

But let us clearly indicate that our hesitation is the reluctance of patriotism and not of cowardice, or of indifference. Let us feel that it is the duty of patriots sometimes to make "such a timely union in favor of the law with the law on their side, that they may not find themselves under the necessity of conspiring instead of consulting." In this spirit while there is yet opportunity we should stand up and stand together for the preservation in all its purity and strength, of municipal government, the right of each community to manage its own affairs, as the only system which, under proper influences, can preserve a nation from foreign enemies, or that greater evil, "absorption by itself." It is for this I would have Virginians arouse themselves to the exigencies of our situation, and bid them show our enemies, if such we must call them, that we are not the feeble enervated race which they hope will pass away before their superior energy, as the Indian passes away before the white man. Or with kindlier feelings, without defiance or abuse, let us "show their fierce zeal a worthier cause"—show them the power and prosperity of calm, serene independence, bid them imitate our example, and substituting a generous rivalry for sectional hatred, let our only differences be as "one star differeth from another in glory"—and thus working in concert, mingling in sublime harmony the full notes of many noble instruments, we shall form the mighty diapason whose tones shall charm a world.

In this lofty chorus of States there should be no grander strain than that of Virginia. In all the strength of love and hope I rejoice to think that though her harp be now unstrung, no cord is lost—and touched by proper hands she may yet remember all her antique melody, and thrill with all her ancient music. Mourning over her errors, omissions and negligencies, we are consoled by the reflection that her character is still adorned by much of the "homely beauty of the good old cause"—there is still a dignity, a refinement, an elevation about it that would redeem a thousand faults. In poverty or wealth her society has still been bound together by that "triple cord not easily broken."

the Honor of Man, the Purity of Woman, and the Sanctity of Religion.

I think we shall acknowledge these to be the main elements and chief securities of individual happiness, of social stability, and of national greatness. We have ample evidence that neither physical nor intellectual, nor even in its lower sense, moral improvement, will permanently elevate and dignify a State or a nation. We must look to a higher source and to a more sustaining, to "govern them and lift them up forever." You cannot learn too early that the cultivation of the higher powers of the mind, or the better feelings of the heart, for mere earthly purposes, does not yield the truest nor most enduring happiness. If we have no higher aim, there is danger, nay there is almost certainty, that when disappointment or affliction comes—when the world loses its charm and the future hangs before us like some vast funeral pall, that heart and mind will be paralyzed or embittered, and we shall only have the sad alternative of choosing between the fates of the mocking misanthropist, or of the deep lethargy of that despair which has not learned to look beyond time to eternity. Its value will pardon the repetition of the truism that the miseries and misfortunes of nations as of individuals are oftener the results of their own follies and crimes, than of the cruelties and oppressions of others. But we dislike to acknowledge our own errors, and are too prone to the hasty sad generalization, and mournful self-fulfilling prophecy, that depreciation and final degradation are the inevitable laws of social and national existence as death is of man's mortal career. I am no perfectionist, but yet it seems to me that in our speculations in social philosophy there is a safe middle ground between the vain glory of the optimist and the depression of the pessimist—a middle ground, where recollecting the frailties of humanity we cannot dream of its perfection, but remembering its powers and capacities, we can hope and believe in its indefinite improvement.

These thoughts rise more prominently before me just now because there are still lingering on my ear the "elegiac and dirge-like" tones of an exiled man who I fear has mistaken the failure of his own cause for the ruin and degradation of his kind. It was

my fortune a few days since to hear the address of the distinguished Irish patriot, John Mitchel, before the literary societies of the University of Virginia. That speech is already published. You will read it, of course, and judge for yourselves—and judge too if I do him injustice in what I am about to say. At least we shall all agree, after reading it, that whatever of positive evil or of morbid sensitiveness English law and social polity may have produced in Ireland, it has not degraded all her noble intellect, nor quenched the fire of her burning eloquence. The limits and purposes of this address would not allow me, if I desired it, to discuss at any length the doctrines of Mr. Mitchel's speech. It falls in with my purpose however, to warn you against what I esteem to be its gloomy tendencies, and to enter my protest in advance against its depressing influences. I venture then to say, that if I have not mistaken the drift of that speech, I would not hold its philosophy, I would not have my brother Virginians follow in its faith—no, not for all the gold of that Australia in whose wilds he nursed these bitter fancies.

The purpose of his speech, as I understood it, was to prove that the Civilization of the nineteenth century is hollow and heartless—that it is utterly impossible to improve the whole race of man, the "*genus homo*"—that the world is governed by what I must call the see-saw principle—that improvement and elevation in one nation is certain to be compensated by the contemporaneous decay and degradation of some other race, and to be requited moreover by ages of evil against years of good—that even the best and bravest men act without reference to posterity or the world—that war and not peace calls forth the grandest qualities of manhood and of womanhood—and that after all, the mournful fact is established that human progress, like the progress of the material world, is in a cycloid, the nations in their course but resembling the passing year, with a spring time of hope, a summer of teeming fertility, the autumn of abundance and then the inevitable "winter of discontent." Surely my friends we will not receive this philosophy. Rather would we say if this gloomy picture be correct, if these dismal dogmas be true, "let chaos come again," for energy, noble thoughts, heroic deeds, life itself—these are but cheats, vain and false delusions. Mr.

Mitchel attempts to parry, but cannot conquer, the overwhelming objection to this theory of non-progress, or progress in a circle, or progress here, compensated by retrogression there, that if generally received it would take away all motive for patriotic effort or generous self sacrifice in a good cause. Would it not? The hope of lasting benefit to his country in the deeds he performs, is the chief incentive of the patriot. Convince him that his labors will be useless,—that he is striving vainly to uphold a sinking State—that he is writing his name upon a crumbling stone, and he will strive no more—for you have taken from him that hope which is the mainspring of all good, and high, and honorable deeds. Surely you will say this was meant only for brilliant paradox, or was spoken in momentary gloom. We will not allow even Mr. Mitchel to rob us of the belief that he himself in his noble efforts for the regeneration of his country, looked beyond the triumph of the moment to promote the happiness of after generations, and the unlimited prosperity of countless ages. Nor can we allow him to say, without denial, that the patriots of our revolution, our good and brave men acted simply from the necessity of their being, and not for posterity. In their heroic sacrifices then, in their deep deliberations, in their prophet-like warnings, and in the strength and stability of the government they formed, we have the grandest proofs that they “were the testators to a posterity which they embraced as their own”—that theirs was “the ambition of an insatiable benevolence which, not contented with reigning in the dispensation of happiness during the contracted term of human life, had strained with all the reachings and graspings of vivacious minds to extend the dominion of their bounty beyond the limits of nature, and to perpetuate themselves through generations of generations, as the guardians, the protectors, the nourishers of mankind.”

We of the South will readily unite with Mr. Mitchel in denouncing the mischievous and futile schemes of Exeter Hall—the telescopic humanity of the Jellabys, the cant and hypocrisies of the Chadbands. But avoiding one extreme, we need not fall into the other. Our utter scorn of all pretence should not prevent us from drawing the proper distinction between judicious and officious philanthropy. We may smile contemptuously at

the sentimental sempstress who is “working little handkerchiefs for African picaninnies on the banks of the Joliba”—but let us not forget the deeds and errands of true benevolence. Will not Mr. Mitchell put aside his biting irony for a moment, while we recall a picture of peace—of a great nation responding with touching alacrity to the calls of suffering humanity—stripping its armed vessels of the habiliments of war to freight them down with food for the famishing children of a distant island, and calling its desolate people from the beds of despair and the abodes of wretchedness, to forget their woes, revive their energies, and recover their happiness, in a new home, and under a brighter heaven. Let the nineteenth century be credited for one movement of benevolence in the right direction, and towards the right men.

We may agree with Mr. Mitchell that physical progress is not true civilization. But we should no more reject its “many-voiced, hundred-handed messengers,” because of occasional misapplication, than we should reject the steam-engine because there are “fatal collisions” and “frightful accidents.”

This poor nineteenth century, somewhat boastful, to be sure, may not be so bad after all as he deems it. Viewed aright, the very deceptions we deride may be the truest evidences of moral improvement, the homage of the hypocritical few, to the virtue of the many. Its “balmy sentimental talk” may sometimes be the mere euphuism of cruelty and oppression, but let us hope that with the name, it may after a time acquire the substance of benevolence. Indeed, if we will cast aside our bitterness, I think we may find pleasant evidences of a larger intelligence, of a broader and warmer humanity, disfigured and retarded here and there by frauds, and crimes and injustice, but never wholly arrested. Each age has its leading idea and principle. The present age is marked by an advancement towards an almost unrestricted intercourse between the nations of the earth. New forces and new elements have been developed, whose coming no one foresaw, and whose results no one can predict. The whole human family seems to be in motion. Even China acknowledges a bond of union with the “outside barbarians,” and pours her emigrants on our western shores in such numbers, that we are

forced to borrow the strange hieroglyphics of her tea chests in the publication of our laws. Japan, the hermit of nations, opens its ports and solves the mystery of centuries. Steam strains ten thousand wheels—new motive powers are sought, subdued, and made the viewless ministers of our will—Nature opens two of her strong boxes in California and Australia—continents are traversed, oceans are united—great industrial exhibitions are held—

“The parliaments of man, the federations of the world.”

Mr. Mitchel will pardon this last item, because we live in glass houses ourselves and cannot throw stones, and though the nations went to war after all, it was none the sooner for having attended the “exhibition.” Be this as it may, we are certainly justified in the belief that this grand movement over the face of the earth betokens more than commerce, and vindicates the hope that men hereafter will be united by a brighter “nexus” than “cash payments.”

We must reject Mr. Mitchel’s cyclical theory, because we see an inchoate improvement throughout the whole family of man—because, on his own principles, if war be the great regenerator, Europe and Asia too bid fair just now to be fully restored to their pristine vigor by the “most extensive mutual cutting of mankind’s throats”—because, against his rule, a great nation has arisen here on this continent without any sensible degradation in any other country—but chiefly because it is based upon a false analogy drawn from the physical world. It would lead us to believe that there is no more of morality than of oxygen, no more of patriotism than of carbon on our globe. We rather incline to the belief that moral qualities, civil and religious principles, are capable of indefinite extension without diminution. Upon the whole we must class this theory, which confines civilization to one quarter of the earth, with that congenial speculation in astronomy which claims our own as the only inhabited world—and as the Christian faith peoples all the starry spheres with living souls kneeling in gratitude to the Author of their being, so the Christian hope looks forward here to the time when every con-

continent, and all the islands of the sea, shall be adorned with grander Coliseums and more solemn Pantheons, reared by the hands of a nobler people, and echoing the hymns of a purer faith. These may be the visions of a too sanguine hope—but in the energy they impart, and the activity they induce, are the powers and qualities which purify and elevate. If a mournful catalogue of failures is drawn from history, I answer that we should stand by the grave of dead empires for a nobler purpose than to copy epitaphs for the living—and choose rather to utter inspiring words at the head of the advancing columns, than bid them trail their banners and falter in their march, under the wailing notes, the wild coronach, of grief and degradation.

Equally shall we reject the bloody dogma that war chiefly calls forth the finer, tenderer, more generous qualities of manhood and womanhood. In the highest style of art and beauty, with the warmth of a lover painting his mistress, Mr. Mitchel has drawn for us the picture of a Carthaginian maiden at the moment when her city was beleaguered by the Romans, “shearing off her long raven hair and knotting into bowstrings; aye, and exulting in her beautiful, benighted Pagan soul, to think that silken tress will send the winged death hissing to some Roman heart.” But we must ask Mr. Mitchel to turn from these tresses, glistening like Berenice’s hair, and, (omitting the general items of horror,) to debit the account with Asdrubal’s cruelties, and note with especial care the wholesale infanticide committed by Asdrubal’s wife without the temptation of a “burial society.” Even his “war goddess,” with her premature, but patriotic baldness, must divide her glory with the women of those African tribes oppressed by Carthage—who in these same Punic wars tore the “rich jewels from their Æthiop ears” to defray the expenses of their armies—and would doubtless have offered their “raven hair” but for the sad reflection that the shortness of the staple would have made it unavailing. Nor must Mr. Mitchel fail to remember that the commerce he so much abhors gave “Carthage of the snips” her greatest glory and strength, while war swept her from the earth, and laid an anathema on her reconstruction.

Noble deeds have been done in war by man, and woman has trembled and acted with heroic passion—but oftener has peace

witnessed the tenderness of Scipio without its bloody foil, and triumphed by costlier sacrifices than a maiden's hair. I must confess that as yet wars are sometimes necessary—but I confess with sadness what Mr. Mitchel proclaims with exultation—and in parting with him, I beg leave in all kindness to commend to his reflection, these eloquent and truthful words of a late writer. “War is the inexorable foe of all progress, intellectual, social and spiritual. The man who can slay his brother, or who encourages another to do it, renounces his godlike character, and returns to the community of the hyaena and the tiger. Civilization stands still when armies take the field: it retrogrades when they leave it. Humanity shrieks at the trumpet note of battle, and religion stoops abashed in presence of the warrior with red hands, and the sovereign with a bloody heart.”

Returning from this digression, as you may consider it, I believe you will pardon it for its incidental connection with the main purpose of this address. I could not properly invoke individual energy unless I could speak hopefully of my kind. I could not ask you to work under the belief that all the triumphs and trophies, preserved, or freshly gathered, in this nineteenth century, may be lost. That there is degeneracy in morals in some portions of mankind, we cannot deny—that with “grandeur's growth the mass of misery grows,” is painfully evident—that disastrous eclipses sometimes fall upon human nature, experience and history show us too mournfully. But instead of despondency, this should only arouse us to higher exertions. We do not abandon our navies or our fleets of commerce because the full-sailed vessel sometimes goes down in its pride, and the giant steamship meets a mysterious fate. We learn to look for hidden rocks, and to sail with greater caution. Peace Conventions and Amelioration Societies may end in sad or ludicrous failures. But there is hope, there is strength, in that generous and general individual exertion which

—“like the Spring,
Shall leave no corner of the land untouched,”

and strives on with the full assurance that a great Heart as well as an infinite Mind governs, directs, and blesses the universe.

“We are too apt,” says Burke, “to consider things in the state in which we find them, without sufficiently adverting to the causes by which they have been produced, and possibly may be upheld.” And here in Virginia I think we may claim as he does for his country, “that nothing is more certain than that our manners, our civilization, and all the good things that are connected with manners and civilization, have depended for years upon two principles, and were indeed the result of both combined, the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion.”

I shall not venture presumptuously to recommend any particular courses of study or of reading. But there is one Book that I would place in the centre of your thoughts, as I would place the jewel in the crown and the keystone in the arch. Edward Bulwer, in a late noble oration, advised the youth of Scotland to the prosecution of classic studies, because “he whose early steps have been led into the land of demi-gods and heroes, will find that its very air will enrich the lifeblood of his thoughts, and he will quit the soil with a front which the Greek has directed towards the stars, and a step which imperial Rome has disciplined to the march that carried her eagles in triumph around the world.” It is but just to add that in a meagre paragraph, he “deems it unnecessary to admonish religious Scotland that the most daring speculations as to Nature *may be* accompanied with the humblest faith in those sublime doctrines which open Heaven alike to the wisest philosopher, and the humblest peasant.” But seeing that Bulwer lives in an age where these daring speculations *are* made in defiance of, and for the attempted refutation of, these sublime doctrines and that humble faith, we must deplore that such a mind as his—one that in his later works has shown itself susceptible to pure and sacred influences—did not advocate the study of those nobler classics and those higher oracles which transcend Greek originals and Roman copies, in beauty and sublimity, as far as inspiration is above intellect, and in mighty thoughts, as the heavens are high above the earth. It would have been a noble atonement for the fascinating evils of Falkland and Devereux, if Bulwer had made his pilgrimage to Edinburgh to inculcate with all his force and beauty that there was more of grandeur in the lofty warnings of Isaiah than in the

sublime arrogance of Æschylus—that the nothingness of human wisdom was better taught by the psalmist than by the Œdipus of Sophocles—that the simple story of Ruth shines with a lovelier light than all the meretricious splendours of Aspasia's Court—and that the words under which Felix trembled, and Agrippa wavered, appeal more eloquently to the heart of man than all the persuasion of Cicero, or the thunder of Demosthenes. In comparing these literatures I believe with a distinguished English writer, that even if Greek literature were lost, it would be remembered only as a generation of flowers is remembered—whereas the Bible, “introducing itself to the secret places of the heart, and nourishing there the germs of those awful spiritualities which connect us with the unseen world” can never perish. The Greek classics belong to the library of the scholar—but the Bible is the literature of humanity.

—“and for this single cause
That we have, all of us, one human heart.”

You perceive that I am recommending it to you now mainly for its literary preëminence, but as one searching for gold may find a diamond, so I believe in its constant investigation you will discover its sacred origin, its richer treasures, and its higher rewards. Convinced of these you may venture upon the bolder flights of investigation, because you will never consent to dissipate your faith in daring, impious speculations. The Bible was never intended as a text book of the sciences—these are of men, and that is of God. You will sometimes hear that the Bible is inconsistent with geology—but wait a few months—new theories will come—and you may answer, geology is inconsistent with itself. The Bible is too constant in its teachings for those fickle intellects which change their systems oftener than their garments—found a faith upon every rock except the Rock of Ages—frame a creed from mouldering bones, supplying the connecting links from their own fancies as they fashion bits of cork to supply the missing vertebrae, and denying alike the unity of man and the trinity of God, yield a belief to the rattling skeleton, which they withhold from that form of light transfigured on Mount Tabor.

The cunningest devices which a cold intellectualism proposes as substitutes for religion all err in this—they draw no distinction between matter and spirit—they take no heed of that grand analogy which tells us that as there is a centre of our earth towards which all matter gravitates, so there is above a point towards which all thoughts, all affections, “whatever stirs this mortal frame” must tend. These systems are the offspring of the vanity or pride of man—sometimes even of good men, who are unsatisfied thinkers, who mislead others and gain only irritation for themselves in their search for truth, or who are always finding their buildings falling about them, because they have either based them on treacherous sands, or have failed to use the great corner stone.

There is another class against which youth with its untamed fancies, and its unallicked heart, should be especially warned. I have not yet forgotten how many false lights glare around the path of the young man—how, for instance, he is startled by the brilliant blasphemies of Shelley, and bewildered by his mockeries, ringing with the wild echo of a devil’s laughter. I know how young men, in the brilliancy of his thoughts, have forgotten, if they have not excused, the errors of his life—have forgotten the neglect, perhaps the cruelty, which led a lovely wife to the commission of suicide, his outrages upon domestic purity, his defiance of the laws of God and man. As I would warn you against his life, so I would save you from his doctrines and his fate. For search his works if you will—gather together his choicest blasphemies—repeat the mightiest of his Satanic defiances—and when the hurricane of affliction sweeps over you, they will avail you as little as they did him, their impious author, when in the bay of Spezia, amid a fleet of vessels, his bark alone was borne down by the gale—when the God he had reviled seemed justified in his wrath—where we may fancy that as the waters were closing over that miserable man, in that moment of mortal agony, he heard the words of that awful anathema, “I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.”

In youth we are apt to think there is something contracting in religion—an undue curtailment of the pleasures of the world, an undue stifling of the promptings of ambition. Religion it must

he confessed is sometimes made almost hideous by its teachers—we are called to shudder beneath a God of horror instead of lifting our eyes to a God of mercy—This should not be. A true and healthful spirit teaches us that this world, this bright and beautiful world, this portion of God's great plan, was intended for the pleasure and profit of man. And whilst a pure faith tells us of duty and submission, it restricts us from no pleasure and no prize which a legitimate ambition would covet. It does not diminish the range of the loftiest intellect—it does not check the soarings of the brightest genius, for immortality is the noblest thought of which the mind is capable. It did not stay Newton in his starry flight—it placed no hindrance in that radiant path along which he advanced, till, reaching the line which mortal may not pass, he seemed to need but one step more to place him in the presence of his God. It was the fervor of a christian poet that built with lofty verse the noblest epic of the world—and imparted that genial warmth and sympathy to the myriad-minded Shakespere which gave him “a knowledge of the human heart second only to that of Him who made it.” No thought but immortality can “fill to fulness” the mind of man. Our own Webster as he looked back upon a career rich in all the trophies of time, acknowledged that even his gigantic intellect wanted its crowning ornament in wanting a knowledge of the great Intercessor—in preparing his own epitaph he made no record of his honors, or of the “great legacies of thought” bequeathed to his country—but traced in simple grandeur his deep conviction of the truths of christianity.

With all these evidences, and clouds of noble witnesses, I am sure you will not waste your time in attempting to untie the “knots that tangle human creeds”—satisfied with the ethics, you need not puzzle yourselves with the metaphysics of religion—and may I ask you not to try christianity by the faults, the errors, the failings and bigotries of earthly minds. A profession of religious faith is sometimes but the haughty pharasaical assumption of superior excellence, and only intolerant of the sins of others. But the humble christian in his own weakness is glad to remember that in the summary of virtues, “the greatest of these is charity.” He is ready to acknowledge that “there

never was one thought, from the foundation of the earth, supposing it at all entangled with human passions, which did not offer some blemish, some sorrowful shade of pollution, when it came up for review before a heavenly tribunal." No one can properly claim entire exemption from the trials and temptations of this world, but as the same writer says, "it is the key in which the thoughts and feelings move which determines the stage of moral advancement"—it is the recognition of the high and solemn truth, that from the very fact of its weakness, there can be no happiness for man but in the education and regeneration of the heart. This is the one great truth to be learned by individuals and through them, by States. "It is idle," says an eloquent divine, "to hope by our own short sighted contrivances to ensure to a people a happiness which their own character has not earned. The everlasting laws of God's moral government we cannot repeal, and parchment constitutions however wise, will prove no shelter from the retributions which fall on a degraded community." True civilization is something more than justice between man and man, or between nation and nation. The dove of peace must be substituted for the eagle of conquest, if we would combine expansion with stability—and justice be forgotten in love, if we would approach that divine law which binds together the least and the greatest things, as elements equally essential of this great universe.

In conclusion, I know you will believe I have said thus much to you, not in the spirit of an arrogant or officious monitor, but as a brother, who having advanced farther along the path of life than yourselves, cheerfully paused at your call to exchange friendly greetings, and to warn you of the dangers which lurk around you. I have attempted to speak the language of caution, but not to utter one word of despair. My object has been to invite you to higher resolutions and nobler aspirations—to invoke your aid for a generous mother-land, that, leaning on her children, her course may be onward and upward, her flowing robes unstained by red-republicanism or black infidelity.

For myself, I shall be amply compensated if you shall hereafter recollect any thing I have said to you as words of comfort or of consolation, as at all tending to increase your love of the true, the just, the noble and the pure—I shall have enough of fame if you shall determine thus far to interweave my humble cypher with the evidences of your usefulness, or the record of your renown.